

What is claimed is:

1 1. A communication method comprising the steps of:
2 receiving an instant messaging (IM) message from a first sender to a first
3 recipient; and
4 prompting the first sender for permission to convey the IM message to the second
5 recipient.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
2 receiving an input from the first sender, the input being indicative of the
3 permission to convey the IM message to the second recipient; and
4 conveying the IM message to the second recipient in response to receiving the
5 input.

1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of:
2 indicating to the first sender that the IM message is being conveyed to the second
3 recipient.

1 4. The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of:
2 indicating to the second recipient that the IM message originated from the first
3 sender.

1 5. The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps of:
2 determining whether the first recipient is engaged in an IM chat session with a
3 second sender; and
4 indicating to the first sender, in response to determining that the first recipient is
5 engaged in an IM chat session with a second sender, that the first recipient is engaged in
6 an IM chat session with a second sender.

1 6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
2 waiting a predefined time interval prior to requesting prompting the first sender
3 for permission.

1 7. The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of:
2 indicating to the first sender, in the absence of a response from the first recipient
3 during the predefined time interval, that the first recipient is unavailable.

1 8. The method of claim 6, wherein the step of requesting permission from the
2 first sender is responsive to an absence of an input from the first recipient during the
3 predefined time interval.

1 9. A communication method comprising the steps of:
2 receiving an instant messaging (IM) message from a first sender to a first
3 recipient; and
4 conveying the IM message to a second recipient.

1 10. The method of claim 9, further comprising the step of:
2 indicating to the first sender that the IM message is being conveyed to the second
3 recipient.

1 11. The method of claim 9, further comprising the step of:
2 indicating to the second recipient that the IM message originated from the first
3 sender.

1 12. The method of claim 9, further comprising the steps of:
2 determining whether the first recipient is engaged in an IM chat session with a
3 second sender; and
4 indicating to the first sender, in response to determining that the first recipient is
5 engaged in an IM chat session with a second sender, that the first recipient is engaged in
6 an IM chat session with a second sender.

1 13. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of:
2 further indicating to the first sender, in response to determining that the first
3 recipient is engaged in an IM chat session with a second sender, that an IM chat session is
4 being established between the first sender and the second recipient.

1 14. A communication system comprising:
2 receive logic configured to receive an instant messaging (IM) message from a first
3 sender to a first recipient; and
4 prompting logic configured to prompt the first sender for permission to convey the
5 IM message to the second recipient.

1 15. A communication system comprising:
2 means for receiving an instant messaging (IM) message from a first sender to a
3 first recipient; and
4 prompting the first sender for permission to convey the IM message to the second
5 recipient.

1 16. A computer-readable medium comprising:
2 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to receive an
3 instant messaging (IM) message from a first sender to a first recipient; and
4 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to prompt the
5 first sender for permission to convey the IM message to the second recipient.

1 17. The computer-readable medium of claim 16, further comprising:
2 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to receive an
3 input from the first sender, the input being indicative of the permission to convey the IM
4 message to the second sender; and
5 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to convey the
6 IM message to the second recipient in response to receiving input from the first sender.

1 18. The computer-readable medium of claim 17, further comprising:
2 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to indicate to
3 the first sender that the IM message is being conveyed to the second recipient.

1 19. The computer-readable medium of claim 17, further comprising:
2 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to indicate to
3 the second recipient that the IM message originated from the first sender.

1 20. The computer-readable medium of claim 17, further comprising:
2 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to determine
3 whether the first recipient is engaged in an IM chat session with a second sender; and
4 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to indicate to
5 the first sender, in response to determining that the first recipient is engaged in an IM chat
6 session with a second sender, that the first recipient is engaged in an IM chat session with
7 a second sender.

1 21. The computer-readable medium of claim 16, further comprising:
2 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to wait a
3 predefined time interval prior to requesting the input from the first sender.

1 22. The computer-readable medium of claim 21, further comprising:
2 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to indicate to
3 the first sender, in the absence of a response from the first recipient during the predefined
4 time interval, that the first recipient is unavailable.

1 23. A communication system comprising:
2 receive logic configured to receive an instant messaging (IM) message from a first
3 sender to a first recipient; and
4 conveying logic configured to convey the IM message to a second recipient.

1 24. A communication system comprising:
2 means for receiving an instant messaging (IM) message from a first sender to a
3 first recipient; and
4 means for conveying the IM message to a second recipient.

1 25. A computer-readable medium comprising:
2 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to receive an
3 instant messaging (IM) message from a first sender to a first recipient; and
4 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to convey the
5 IM message to a second recipient.

1 26. The computer-readable medium of claim 25, further comprising:
2 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to indicate to
3 the first sender that the IM message is being conveyed to the second recipient.

1 27. The computer-readable medium of claim 25, further comprising:
2 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to indicate to
3 the second recipient that the IM message originated from the first sender.

1 28. The computer-readable medium of claim 25, further comprising:
2 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to determine
3 whether the first recipient is engaged in an IM chat session with a second sender; and
4 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to indicate to
5 the first sender, in response to determining that the first recipient is engaged in an IM chat
6 session with a second sender, that the first recipient is engaged in an IM chat session with
7 a second sender.

1 29. The computer-readable medium of claim 28, further comprising:
2 computer-readable code adapted to instruct a programmable device to further
3 indicate to the first sender, in response to determining that the first recipient is engaged in
4 an IM chat session with a second sender, that an IM chat session is being established
5 between the first sender and the second recipient.